

Deaf Culture Question of the Week – Sept. 3 - 7, 2012  
Bill Newell, Principal Washington School for the Deaf

Which of the deaf professional boxers was at one time ranked number two in the world in the middleweight classification?

- a) William O. Dilsworth
- b) Thomas “Silent” Martin
- c) Hilton “Fitzy” Fitzpatrick
- d) Eugene “Silent” Hairston

Answer “d” – Eugene Hairston became an amateur boxer in 1945 and racked up a 61 wins to 1 loss record. He was a National AAU Champion and a Golden Gloves Champion. He turned pro in 1947 and accomplished a record of 45 wins, 13 losses and five bouts ending in draws. As a professional boxer “Silent” Hairston thrilled crowds with his hard body shots. He fought until 1953 when he retired due to an injury to his eye which blinded him in one eye. He fought his biggest fight against Jake La Motta which resulted in one of his five draws. During the height of his career he was ranked number two in the world middleweight class behind Sugar Ray Robinson. Eugene “Silent” Hairston is also credited with the practice of equipping boxing rings with lights that flash to signal the beginning and ending of each round. [Cited from: Gannon (1981), Deaf Heritage and Moore (date), Great Deaf Americans, The Second Edition, p. 256-261.]

See a picture of Eugene “Silent” Hairston here:

[http://boxrec.com/media/index.php/Eugene\\_Hairston](http://boxrec.com/media/index.php/Eugene_Hairston)

Read a brief article discussing Mr. Hairston’s career here:

<http://www.newsday.com/sports/boxing-silent-knight-fierce-warrior-in-his-heyday-1.757282>

Note: All of the person’s mentioned in the answer choices were deaf professional boxers who deserve recognition in their own right. You can read more about them in Deaf Heritage, pp. 290-292.

Note that

Deaf Culture Questions of the Week are archived at: <http://www.wsd.wa.gov>